Amendments to the Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A heat-sensitive stencil master comprising a heat-sensitive polymeric film having a thickness of less than 10 μm and, coated thereon, a solid ~~resinous~~ foam comprising a cross-linked resin and a foaming agent.

2. (Original) A stencil master according to claim 1, wherein the foaming agent is a surfactant having an HLB of greater than 6.

3. (Original) A stencil master according to claim 1, wherein the solid foam incorporates a fibrous material.

4. (Original) A stencil master according to claim 3, wherein the fibrous material has a diameter of greater than 1 μm and less than 10 μm, and a length in the range of 100 μm to 14 mm.

5. (Original) A stencil master according to claim 3, wherein the fibrous material has a length in the range of 100 μm to 500 μm.

6. (Currently amended) A stencil master according to claim 3, wherein the fibrous material is selected from the group consisting of carbon fibres, glass fibres, and polymeric fibres ~~such as polyester fibres and polyvinyl alcohol fibres~~.

7. (Original) A stencil master according to claim 6, wherein the fibrous material comprises carbon fibres.

8. - 9. (Cancelled)

10. (Currently amended) A stencil master according to claim ~~9~~1, wherein the resin is cross-linked by irradiation.

11. (Currently amended) A stencil master according to claim ~~10~~1, wherein the resin is cross-linked by electron beam irradiation.

12. (Currently amended) A stencil master according to claim ~~9~~1, wherein the resin is a polyurethane cross-linked through unsaturated acrylate groups.

13. (Original) A stencil master according to claim 1, wherein the solid foam incorporates an antistatic agent.

14. (Original) A stencil master according to claim 1, wherein the heat-sensitive polymeric film has a release coating on the side of the film opposite the solid foam.

15. (Original) A stencil master according to claim 1, wherein the foaming agent comprises ammonium stearate, a sulphate foaming agent or a mixture thereof.

16. (Cancelled)

17. (Original) A stencil for use in a digital duplicating printing process comprising a stencil master as defined in claim 1, which has been thermally imaged to produce voids in the heat-sensitive polymeric film.

18. (Cancelled)

19. (Currently amended) A heat-sensitive stencil master comprising a heat-sensitive polymeric film and, coated thereon, a solid porous ~~resin~~ coating comprising a cross-linked resin

and having a filler dispersed therein, wherein the filler is selected from the group consisting of carbon fibres, carbon particles and mixtures thereof.

20. (Original) A stencil master according to claim 19, wherein the filler comprises carbon fibres having a diameter of greater than 1 μm and less than 10 μm, and a length in the range of 100 μm to 14 mm.

21. (Original) A stencil master according to claim 20, wherein the carbon fibres have a length in the range of 100 μm to 500 μm.

22. - 23. (Cancelled)

24. (Currently amended) A stencil master according to claim ~~23~~19, wherein the resin is cross-linked by electron beam irradiation.

25. (Cancelled)

26. (Original) A stencil for use in a digital duplicating printing process comprising a stencil master as defined in claim 19, which has been thermally imaged to produce voids in the heat-sensitive polymeric film.

27. (Cancelled)

28. (Original) A method for manufacturing a heat-sensitive stencil comprising coating onto a heat-sensitive polymeric film having a thickness of less than 10 μm, a liquid foam comprising a resin dispersed or dissolved in a volatile liquid, and, optionally, a foaming agent, and drying the liquid foam to form a solid foam coating.

29. (Original) A method according to claim 28, wherein the volatile liquid is water.

30. (Original) A stencil master produced by the method defined in claim 28.

31. (New) A stencil master according to claim 6, wherein the polymeric fibres are selected from the group consisting of polyester fibres and polyvinyl alcohol fibres.

32. (New) A stencil master according to claim 1, wherein the stencil master has a stiffness (mN):coating weight (g/m^2) ratio of at least 6.

33. (New) A stencil master according to claim 1, wherein the stencil master has a stiffness (mN):coating weight (g/m^2) ratio of at least 8.

34. (New) A stencil master according to claim 1, wherein the stencil master has a stiffness (mN):coating weight (g/m^2) ratio of at least 10.

35. (New) A stencil master according to claim 19, wherein the stencil master has a stiffness (mN):coating weight (g/m^2) ratio of at least 6.

36. (New) A stencil master according to claim 19, wherein the stencil master has a stiffness (mN):coating weight (g/m^2) ratio of at least 8.

37. (New) A stencil master according to claim 19, wherein the stencil master has a stiffness (mN):coating weight (g/m^2) ratio of at least 10.